

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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R 131200Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1209

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FOR NEA/EX

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP, ASUP, SY

SUBJECT: MAJOR HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES FOR GLQ

REF: A. DAMASCUS 0297 PARA 4

B. DAMASCUS 1262 PARA 6

C. 6 FAM 782.2

POST HAS, OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS, HAD A CHANCE TO CHECK THE SERVICABILITY OF MANY OF THE HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES ON HAND AND HAS COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT MOST, IF NOT ALL OF THE STOVES, REFRIGERATORS, AIR-CONDITIONERS, AND WASHING MACHINES ARE JUST ABOUT ON THEIR LAST GASP. POST REALIZES THAT IT WOULD SEEM IMPOSSIBLE FOR STOVES TO BE TOO OLD TO BE SERVICABLE, BUT UNFORTUNATELY SITTING FOR SEVEN YEARS HAS DONE THEM MORE HARM THAN GOOD. POST WILL OUTLINE PRESENT SITUATION ITEM BY ITEM.

2. STOVES: ON HAND 14, SCRAP 8, USABLE BUT NOT SUITABLE 14, GOOD 2. AT PRESENT THOSE OCCUPYING GLQ ARE MAKING DO WITH WHAT IS AVAILABLE BUT THIS STERLING QUALITY AND PIONEER ATTITUDE IS NOW A THING OF THE PAST. POST FEELS THAT ALL NEW GAS STOVES SHOULD BE SUPPLIED FOR GLQ.

3. REFRIGERATORS: ON HAND 15, SCRAP 2, USABLE (I.E. KEEPS THINGS COLD) 8, GOOD 5. HERE AGAIN POST HAS MANAGED TO GET ALONG WITH PRESENT EQUIPMENT. A GOOD
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EXAMPLE OF THIS IS THE REFRIGERATOR SITUATION AT ADMIN OFF. GLQ.

TWO REFRIGERATORS ARE BEING USED; ONE DOES NOT HAVE ANY SHELVES SO IT IS USED TO COOL BULKY ITEMS AND THE OTHER HAS NO COMPARTMENTS ON THE DOOR SO IS ONLY HALF USEFUL. THIS IS JUST ONE EXAMPLE BUT A GOOD ONE OF HOW WE HAVE MANAGED DURING THE OPENING MONTHS.

4. AIRCONDITIONERS: ON HAND 22, SCRAP 6, USABLE BUT TEND TO HAVE LOW EFFICIENCY 16, GOOD NONE. POST IS NOT CONSIDERING THIS A PROBLEM ANY MORE SINCE WE UNDERSTAND NEW A/C UNITS ORDERED AND ON THE WAY.

5. WASHING MACHINES: ON HAND 6, SCRAP 1, POOR BUT USABLE 5, GOOD NONE. ALL PRESENT MODELS WASHING MACHINES AVAILABLE AT POST ARE ANTIQUES AND ARE CAUSING MANY PROBLEMS. THEY ARE ALL WRINGER TYPE WITH SMALL (MAXIMUM LOAD ONE SHEET KD TWO PILLOW CASES) SEPARATE SPIN TUB. ALL PEOPLE USING THESE FIND THAT WASHING TAKES UP TO THREE DAYS A WEEK. MACHINES HAVE A TENDENCY TO BREAK DOWN AND SPARE PARTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE. CANABALIZATION HAS KEPT THE PRESENT ONES RUNNING BUT SOLUTION IS NO LONGER FEASIBLE. (SOON WE WILL HAVE TO CANABALIZE THE LIVE ONES).

6. DRYERS: POST AT PRESENT HAS NO RPT NO DRYERS AT POST. DAMASCUS IS VERY DUSTY MOST OF THE YEAR. WITH EVERYONE LIVING IN APARTMENTS THE POST HAS COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT GAS TYPE DRYERS ARE A MUST FOR POST. BALCONIES ARE SMALL AND CLOTHES ARE DIRTY ALMOST AS QUICKLY AS DRYED. ALREADY WIVES ARE COMPLAINING ABOUT DRYING FACILITIES AND THIS, COUPLED WITH ANCIENT TYPE WASHING MACHINES, IS A POTENTIAL MAJOR MORALE PROBLEM.

7. FREEZERS: POST HAS ONLY ONE OLD FREEZER AND THAT IS IN USE AT RESIDENCE. VEGETABLES ARE ONLY SEASONABLE AND MEAT IN GOOD QUALITY IS AVAILABLE IN SYRIA ONLY OCCASIONALLY. WHAT POST HAS BEEN DOING IS TO GET WHATEVER THE FREEZER COMPARTMENT WILL HOLD IN EXISTING OLD REFRIGERATORS AND THAT IS ALL THAT CAN BE BROUGHT FROM EITHER THE LOCAL MAKET, LEBANON, OR THE COMMISSARY. POST AGAIN FEELS UNCLASSIFIED

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THAT FREEZERS SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE SO FAMILIES CAN STOCK UP ON FRESH ITEMS WHEN THEY ARE AVAILABLE. POST HAS IN MIND ONE LARGE UPRIGHT FREEZER FOR TWO FAMILIES. ALSO ONE LARGE FREEZER NEEDED FOR AMB AND DCM RESIDENCE. THIS WOULD ADEQUATELY TAKE CARE OF PRESENT NEEDS.

8. ITEMS LISTED FROM PARA 2 TO PARA 7 ARE IN ORDER OF PRIORITY. POST WOULD SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING:

A. STOVES: POST WOULD NEED MINIMUM 13 NEW GAS STOVES TO HANDLE PRESENT STAFFING REQUIREMENTS.

B. REFRIGERATORS: POST WOULD RECOMMEND THAT ALL NEW REFRIGERATORS BE PURCHASED. EVEN THOSE LISTED AS GOOD ARE NOW OVER EIGHT YEARS OLD AND THEIR FUTURE LIFE EXPECTANCY CANNOT BE JUDGED.

C. AIRCONDITIONERS: POST UNDERSTANDS THAT AIRCONDITIONERS HAVE ALREADY BEEN PURCHASED AND ARE BEING SHIPPED.

D. WASHING MACHINES: POST STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT ALL NEW WASHING MACHINES BE PURCHASED. THESE SHOULD BE AUTOMATIC TYPE, WITH WATER LEVEL TYPE CUT OFF.

E. DRYERS: DUE TO THE FACT THAT EVERYONE HAS TO DO THEIR OWN LAUNDRY AND IN THE WINTER DRYING CLOTHES BECOME A PROBLEM POST RECOMMENDS MINIMUM 15 GAS TYPE DRYERS.

F. FREEZERS: FOR REASONS OUTLINED IN PARAGRAPH 7 POST FEELS THAT 10 UPRIGHT FREEZERS WOULD TAKE CARE OF NEEDS OF POST. ELECTRICITY IN THE CITY IS MIXED. DAMASCUS IS IN THE PROCESS OF SWITCHING TO 220 VOLT 50 CYCLE HOUSE WIRING THERE HAS BEEN SPORADIC PROGRESS IN THIS FIELD BUT POST FEELS THAT OVER THE 10 YEARS THE CITY WILL BE PRE-DOMINANTLY 220 VOLT. THEREFORE POST WOULD RECOMMEND 75 PERCENT OF ELECTRICALLY OPERATED APPLIANCES BE 220 VOLT 50 CYCLE AND BALANCE (25 PERCENT) BE 110 VOLT 50 CYCLE. IN INSTANCES USE OF TRANSFORMERS WILL BE NECESSARY OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

11. POST IS ALSO AWARE THAT BUREAU HAS GIVEN MUCH CONSIDERATION TO ALL OF THE ABOVE ITEMS AND WE ARE SURE THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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MANY OF THESE ARE ALREADY IN THE PIPELINE FOR DAMASCUS. HOWEVER, NOTHING CONCRETE HAS BEEN RECEIVED AT POST. AFTER RECEIVING STATUS OF SHIPMENT FOR THOSE ITEMS LISTED IN PARA 2 THROUGH 7 POST WILL BE ABLE TO DETERMINE WHAT, IF ANY, ITEMS NEED BE PURCHASED FROM FREE ZONE BEIRUT OR IF POSSIBLE LOCALLY.
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